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Article

Title: Thinking of marrying abroad? Beware the red tape!

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by Rob Parker, solicitor partner specialising in family law

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“Exotic destinations are becoming ever more popular for couples to travel to and get married, then stay on for the honeymoon”, says Rob Parker, solicitor at Phillips Solicitors, “But beware if you are finalising those preparations, there are certain documents that you’ll need to produce before you can tie the knot. You must check with the tour operator and/or local consulate or the embassy of the country in which you wish to marry as to what documentation you may be expected to produce - all prior to the ceremony. Failure to do so could jeopardise the big day”

So what documents might you need to produce?

Requirements vary, but typically these include your birth certificate, a valid 10-year passport, a declaration confirming single status, your Decree Absolute (if divorced), your previous spouse’s death certificate (if widowed) and the written consent of your parents if you are under 18 (or even 21 in some countries).

How you can organise your declarations as to single status

The declaration confirming your single status is usually a Statutory Declaration or Affidavit. This is a legal document that can be obtained from a solicitor who can authenticate oaths on statements. The declaration can only be made individually, not jointly, so you and your partner will both need one. It normally sets out your full contact details; your status as single, divorced or widowed; your nationality; your occupation; and your passport number. The document then has to be signed by you and sworn on oath as correct before it is signed and stamped by a solicitor.

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Whose responsibility is it?

It's your responsibility to get in touch with the tour operator and/or the local consulate or embassy and find out exactly what information they need for the declaration, which varies from country to country. One important thing to bear in mind is that some countries require that the declaration as to single status is entered into no sooner than 6 months, or sometimes even 3 months, before the ceremony, so timing can be important.

How much might this cost?

"Fees vary" says Rob, "but Phillips is presently offering a fixed fee service to our clients who plan to marry abroad, so you'll know exactly where you stand, upfront."

Give Rob Parker a call now on 01256 854676, or email Rob for more details at rparker@phillips-law.co.uk and visit our website at www.phillips-law.co.uk

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